Expanding & Customizing Our Toolkit: Engaging students in their Language Learning Process

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Presentation Overview

1. Need for Engagement & Customization in our Classrooms
2. 5 Strategies to Build a Culture of Engagement
   - Practical guidelines and best practices
   - Activity and tool suggestions

Today’s Realities

English for Communication and Workplace Needs
Evolving Student Expectations
Ministry of Education Guidelines & Support
Difficult Classroom Realities
Increasingly Connected World

Today’s Opportunities

Increased Motivation & Creativity
Emphasis on Engagement & Customization in Learning
New Teacher Roles: Facilitator & Guide
New Student Roles: Active & Self-Directed

National Foreign Languages Project 2020

~by 2020 most Vietnamese students ... will be able to use a foreign language confidently in
   daily communication and
   study and work
   in an environment that is
   integrated,
   multi-cultural, and
   multi-lingual

Key NFLP 2020 Tasks

1. Teach high school math and science in English
2. Teach university courses at senior year in English: ICT, Engineering, Tourism, Business, Nursing etc.
3. Renovate tests, exams to cover all 4 language skills
4. ICT in English language teaching and learning
To Meet these Goals, We Need to:

1. Hire and keep teachers who meet English speaking requirements (e.g., CEFR B2 or C1)
2. Train teachers in current English teaching methods

Source: http://vietnamnet.vn

What can Engagement do for you?

How can you Customize your Instruction?

Benefits of Engagement

• Strong correlation between high engagement and high achievement (Handelsman et al., 2005)
• Increased comprehension (Love, 2012)
• More creative, independent, & active learning style (Love, 2012)
• Increased motivation—students and teachers

Characteristics of Engagement

• Student Course Engagement Questionnaire (Handelsman, Briggs, Sullivan, & Towler, 2005)
• Factors: skills, emotional, participation
  – Putting forth effort
  – Applying course materials to own life
  – Thinking about course material between classes
  – Having fun in class
  – Participating in class
  – Helping classmates
  – Really desiring to learn material

Put Learners at the Center

Engagement!

Effort & Involvement (Kuh, 2009)
CARCS Model of Design

1. **Control**: Students make choices in their learning
2. **Attention**: Activities arouse students’ interest and curiosity (multimedia, visually interesting, topics interesting, etc.)
3. **Relevance**: Students feel the task is related to their lives, careers, experiences, pop culture
4. **Confidence**: Requires feedback, goals, etc.
5. **Satisfaction**: Prizes, encouragement, challenges, competitions

(Stroud, 2013)

5 Strategies to Build Student Engagement & Customize Instruction

Create a Wordle

Word Cloud Generators:
- Wordle (wordle.net)
- Tagxedo (tagxedo.com)
- Tagul (tagul.com)
- Tag Crowd (tagcrowd.com)

Kahoot polling software

Use for:
- Introducing a topic or vocabulary
- Coalescing main ideas of online discussions & then students critique
- Turn an Essay into a Poster
- Essay analysis for vocabulary or idea themes

https://getkahoot.com/
1. Students go to kahoot.it
2. They enter the displayed pin
3. Students see choices on screen & chooses answer on their device.
4. Graph displays student answers.

How can you use Kahoot?
- Collaborative surveys to assess student knowledge after studying material
- Individual quizzes to assess student knowledge after studying material
- Surveys to assess topic knowledge before studying material
- Opinion surveys to start discussions

Professional Development
- What small changes can you make in your teaching in order for it to evolve as your students and resources change?
- What resources can you access for ideas or training in this area?
- What goals can you make for yourself, and how will you know when you’ve met those goals?

Prioritize collaboration & in-class participation
Preparing yourself & your class

- Greater comfort with English proficiency = greater number of communicative teaching strategies (Eslami & Fatahi, 2008)
- Build a network of teachers & support
- Create a sense of classroom community (Bixby, 2016) & teacher-student relationships (Gordon, 2016)

Create a Culture of Participation

- Create a risk-taking atmosphere
- Structure some activities that build fluency over accuracy
- Encourage healthy competition
- Find & occupy wider spaces
- Consider a participation grade (with rubric)
- Include activities that require speaking and collaboration

Building Literacy as Communication

Reader’s Theater
Reading Groups/Clubs
Book Share Time
Book Circles
Character Interviews/Videos

Padlet.com

Padlet.com walls

- Vocabulary, grammar, reading, speaking walls
- Teacher-created walls
- Student-created content
- Brainstorming
- Feedback
- Multi-media
- Any platform

InnovaBons in Language Teaching and Learning, SEAMEO 2016

How to Engage Students with Padlets

- Have students re-organize material into meaningful units & discuss
- Have students create their own collaboratively, making videos, images, or texts as appropriate

Utilize collaborative projects

Preparation Stage → Collaboration Stage → Reflective Stage

Teacher support

(Bikowski & Vithanage, 2016)

Collaborative Writing Benefits

- Increased motivation (Kowal & Swain, 1994)
- Increased ownership (Storch, 2005)
- Increased critical thinking (Kinsella & Sherak, 1998)
- Increased gains to individual writing after participating in collaborative writing (Bikowski & Vithanage, 2016)
- Improvement in content, organization, and vocabulary (Shehadeh, 2011)
- Higher quality writing (Storch, 2005)

Google Docs & Hangouts

Text and video

Editing with Google Docs

1. See or revert to previous versions
2. Leave comments

Higher quality writing (Storch, 2005)
**Student-Client Projects**

1. Client gives student groups project
   - Project meets mutual needs
   - Client communicates goals & project outline
   - Project can be big or small
   - Establishes English as Relevant in their context

2. Students work on project goals
   - Students find & evaluate information
   - Teachers:
     - Facilitate group work
     - Help students identify what they do and don't need
     - Help students organize information

3. Students communicate project outcome to client
   - Clear guidelines and assessment needed
   - Presentation & written report if possible

**Simulated Real-World Tasks**

- Groups work on a real-world type problem
- Integrated 4 skills
- Speech acts determined by project
- Example: Designing an in-country tour
Shared Social Mapping Projects

1. Gather data about a personal, social, cultural, or other phenomenon
2. Embed this data within mapping software (Click2Map) or Google Earth

Digital Cultural Collage

- Groups gather information about a figure from the target culture
- Construct a digital representation
  - Video interviews
  - Drawings
  - Images
  - Links

Customizing Content

Customization is critical with disciplinary learning in English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
- Pragmatic
- Needs-based approach
- Language teaching and learning within specific contexts (Belcher, 2009)

Ask yourself: What do my students really need English for?

Customized Photography Project

- Goals: Help students reflect on their learning
- Example:
  - Students identify barriers to developing their spoken English
  - Ways to overcome those barriers
- Students take pictures and make a presentation on their lives
- Guidelines (Moiseenko, 2015):
  - Start with simple tasks
  - Allow creativity
  - Provide examples
  - Give scaffolded feedback

English for Academic Purposes: Academic Honesty

- Train learners how to write for academic purposes
- Have learners reflect on their source use practices

Don’t Do This #2:
Plagiarism

http://linguistics.ohio.edu/ELIP/Resources
Customized Videos

Digital Storytelling

- Short & engaging multimedia stories
  - Stories through text, images, video, music
- Topics:
  - Personal stories
  - Historical figure from different points of view
  - Community/cultural stories
  - Tell a different ending of a story
  - Tell a story from a different character’s point of view
  - Make a travel guide
  - Map out a novel—characters, problem, solution

Digital Storytelling

Vary assessments according to context

Portfolios

Free online rubric maker

Student choice crucial & can include:
1. Audio and video recordings
   - Readings, oral presentations, plays, group presentations
2. Writing samples
   - Journals, book reports, papers, projects, creative works, can be collaborative
3. Art work
   - Pictures, drawings, graphs, charts, multimedia collages
4. Reflection statement on goals & what they’ve learned
5. Can be print- or digital-based
   Sample: http://julieerscheleaportfolios.weds.com/

RubiStar http://rubistar.4teachers.org/
Feedback that Matches Students’ Needs

- Customize feedback practices to your context
  - Writing: Train students on your feedback approach & utilize student input (Haupt & Bikowski, 2014)
- Include praise + areas for improvement
- Include specifics
- Utilize peer review as possible

Prepare students to become lifelong learners of digital literacies currently unknown

http://www.futurelab.org.uk/sites/default/files/Digital_Literacy_handbook_0.pdf

Train students to maximize mobile technologies for their learning

Resources and searching
### Roles of devices in learning

- Resource
- Learning Facilitator
- Motivator

How do students learn with mobile devices?

[Bikowski & Casal]

### Framework for Learning with Digital Resources

1. Operational Competence
2. Learning Competence: Monitoring Learning
3. Learning Competence: Making Connections

### Operational Competence

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| 1. Operational Competence: Recognizes Features in the Digital Learning Environment | Recognizes or discovers the organization, features, and affordances of the digital learning environment  
Participant recognizes affordances (e.g., hyperbolicity, navigational, highlighting, scaffolding), or discovers through exploration and clicking. Successful in troubleshooting. |

[Bikowski & Casal]

### Learning Competence: Monitoring Learning

- 2a. Varies or adapts behavior depending on reading or learning purpose, or affordances of the digital environment
- 2b. Plans next learning steps

- Participant navigates digital space making intentional choices (e.g., previewing, scrolling, selecting, accessing content, returning to task) that match their stated purpose.
- Participant re-expresses a plan for next steps after exploring digital content (e.g., task completion, information to look up).

### Learning Competence: Making Connections

3a. Makes connections between prior knowledge/experience and digital material to construct meaning or resolve confusion
3b. Makes connections across ideas or digital material to construct meaning or resolve confusion
3c. Finds a personally motivating connection between own experiences and digital material

- Participant connects ideas, particularly across media, (e.g., images, text, video, links) in their meaning-making process.
- Participant connects with content on an emotional or personal level and uses connection to motivate further learning or exploration.

[Bikowski & Casal]

### Digital Game Language Learning

- Game
- Curiosity & Motivation
- Teacher Guidance
- Engaging Space

LEARNING & LANGUAGE USE
Digital Games to Build a Shared Context

- Minecraft in Freshman Composition
- Shared context: Zombie apocalypse

http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume18/ej70/ej70int/

Learner Training

1. Troubleshooting
   - What to do if the technology doesn’t work
   - Hardware: speakers, mouse, CD player, monitor
   - Internet connectivity/wifi
   - File type troubles
   - Software
   - Browsers
   - Printers
   - Email

http://webpage.pace.edu/ms16182p/troubleshooting

2. Privacy & security
   - Zip It! Keep personal stuff private
   - Block It! Block people who send uncaring messages; don’t open unknown links
   - Flag It! Tell someone trustworthy about suspicious behavior

3. New technologies/activities
   - New-technology projects not graded
   - Have students experiment with the technology
   - Engage in a cyclical approach to learner training

Teacher Education in CALL, p.323

5 Strategies to Build Student Engagement & Customize Instruction

1. Allow your teaching to evolve as the learning landscape evolves
2. Prioritize collaboration and in-class participation
3. Develop real-world projects that extend beyond the classroom and encourage shared learning
4. Customize course content to meet student needs
5. Train students to maximize mobile technologies for their own learning

Allow for tasks that...

- Permit self-expression and questioning
- Are motivating and challenging for the learner
- Build students’ self-confidence
- Allow for independent thinking
- Encourage learners to seek out knowledge from sites other than the textbook
- Allow for teacher flexibility
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References & Resources


